

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Amend the claims as follows:

1. (original) A process for preparing conjugated linoleic acid by microorganisms, characterized by hydrolyzing oat fat and isomerizing the linoleic acid released in the hydrolysis into conjugated linoleic acid by the microorganisms.

2. (original) A process according to claim 1, characterized in that the grain is untreated oat, pretreated oat or an oat fraction.

3. (currently amended) A process according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterized in that the fat hydrolysis is caused by the enzyme activity of oat.

4. (currently amended) A process according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, characterized in that the fat hydrolysis is carried out by adding external enzyme activity.

5. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, characterized in that isomerization is carried out by a beneficial bacterium (bacteria).

6. (currently amended) A process according to ~~claims~~ claim 1, characterized in that the beneficial bacterium is a propionic acid bacterium.

7. (original) A process according to claim 6, characterized in that the propionic acid bacterium is a strain belonging to the species *Propionibacterium freudenreichii*, preferably a strain belonging to its subspecies *Propionibacterium freudenreichii* ssp. *freudenreichii* or *Propionibacterium freudenreichii* ssp. *shermanii*.

8. (original) A process according to claim 7, characterized in that the propionic acid bacterium is *Propionibacterium freudenreichii* ssp. *shermanii* JS, DSM 7067.

9. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 8~~claim 1, characterized in that isomerization is carried out at a pH of about 6.5 to 9.5.

10. (original) A process according to claim 9, characterized in that isomerization is preferably carried out at a pH of about 7.0 to 9.0, more preferably at a pH of about 8.0 to 8.5.

11. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 10~~claim 1, characterized in that the hydrolysis and isomerization steps are carried out consecutively.

12. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 10~~claim 1, characterized in that the hydrolysis and isomerization steps are carried out in parallel.

13. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~claim 1, characterized in that the preparation of conjugated linoleic acid occurs in connection with the preparation of a food product.

14. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 13~~claim 1, characterized in that mainly cis-9, trans-11 isomer of conjugated linoleic acid is formed therein.

15. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 14~~claim 1, characterized in that conjugated linoleic acid is fixed to solids by adjusting the pH of the reaction mixture to about 3 to 9, preferably to a value lower than 7.0, most preferably to about 4 to 6.

16. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 15~~claim 1, characterized in that conjugated linoleic acid is isolated from the reaction broth and possibly dried.

17. (currently amended) A process according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 15~~claim 1,
c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that conjugated linoleic acid, bacterial cells and the oat material
used as starting material, which is preferably oat material are concentrated and possibly
dried.

18. (original) A process according to claim 17, c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that
linoleic acid, bacterial cells and oat material used as the starting material are re covered,
concentrated and lyophilized.

19. (original) Oat for use in the preparation of conjugated linoleic acid.

20. (original) A process for preparing conjugated linoleic acid from linoleic acid,
c h a r a c t e r i z e d in that oat is used as the source of linoleic acid.